

6 March 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY BOARD

VIA: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Psychological Strategy Board; Mr. Gray's Report to the President, dated 22 February 1952.

1. Pursuant to the request of the Board, a committee consisting of Mr. Sargeant for Mr. Webb, General Magruder for Mr. Foster, and Mr. Wisner for General Smith has considered the subject report in connection with the President's request.

2. As a result of the independent consideration initially of each of the Committee members, written exchanges of views, and discussion in two meetings of the Committee, this report is submitted as representing their unanimous views as their analysis, general conclusions, and recommendations to the Board as to the pertinent points to be considered on the subject report.

I.

GENERAL ANALYSIS OF MR. GRAY'S REPORT

3. Taken as a whole, the document is a substantially accurate presentation of the background and development of the Psychological Strategy Board. Actually, it is less a report on "organization and work" than it is a justification for the creation and continuance of the PSB and a platform for an exhortation to reform and correct inter-agency friction. There are certain statements and some recommendations which are open to question and concerning which opinion would differ, depending upon where one sat.

4. It would appear that the principal reasons for Mr. Gray's recommending publication of the report are as follows:

a. To assure a more widespread and satisfactory public and Congressional comprehension and acceptance of the manner in which, and the methods by which, this Government's efforts in the psychological warfare field are being conducted;

b. To create

NSC review(s) completed.

b. To create a climate of public and Congressional opinion more favorable to the obtaining of support for an extensive and costly campaign of propaganda for related measures which are deemed essential to the maintenance and improvement of our world position; and

c. To obtain popular support for certain principles and to attempt to eliminate or break down certain believed errors in current governmental thinking and practice, e.g., departmental jurisdictional jealousies and rigid and inadequate attitudes and philosophies toward policy and the development of a "strategic" approach.

5. The above-mentioned objectives are generally desirable, especially "a" and "b", but obviously require careful consideration as to how they are to be attained.

II.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6. The Committee has reached these conclusions for the indicated underlying reasons and recommends the action stated:

7. Conclusion 6b: The report should not, in any event, be published in its present form.

Reasons:

a. The report is too revealing of sensitive information and relationships which in some particulars are invidious and provocative--more apt to stir up discord than to produce harmony--and, therefore, to be deleted. In the last mentioned category, the report infers a number of inter-agency differences and disputes that would not improve with public airing. Moreover, portions of the report would invite undeserved and unwarranted criticism of the Government--criticism for having done a great deal less than is actually the case in the realization of the need for and the development of machinery to carry out psychological warfare measures.

Furthermore, while certain of the concrete recommendations set forth in the report (principally on Page 15.) have definite merit, it would be inappropriate to publish them prior to a final determination as to which of the recommendations will be adopted and which will not. To make premature public disclosure of the recommendations would tend to limit the freedom of choice of the President and the Board, as well as to become a source of some embarrassment to all concerned, including Mr. Gray himself.

b. The report in

SECRET

b. The report in several instances reveals or indicates matter of a classified nature, such as the inducement of defection. See Page 14.

c. The publication of any report in areas as sensitive as psychological operations might set an unfortunate precedent. It would present a recurring problem insofar as Mr. Gray's successors might feel called upon to submit reports hereafter and the necessity of eliminating the sensitive and classified material, almost certain to be in such a report, before it could be published.

8. Conclusion #2: The report cannot be effectively revised for publication.

Reasons:

a. It was initially thought by the Committee that portions of the report could be used as the basis for arriving at a document which, when published, would accomplish two purposes: first, such a publication might do much to attain the first two indicated objectives of the report, stated in Paragraph 4. above; secondly, and perhaps more important, the release of such a revised report would furnish a suitable occasion and good material for an important Presidential statement to the country and to the world in the form of a radio address, news conference, or press release, as hereafter recommended. However, on more mature consideration and re-examination of the attendant problems and the counterbalancing considerations, it was the Committee's conclusion that the report in the form that it would have to be revised would not do much to accomplish the first purpose; that it was not desirable to publish any portion of the report or even have the fact of its submission be made public; and that the publication of a report was not necessary as an occasion for a Presidential statement.

b. After the deletion of the classified and sensitive material in the report, the remaining content would be relatively innocuous and lack sufficient substance to warrant publication or excite public interest, if published.

c. The deletion of the significant portions of the report would induce inquiry and harmful speculation as to the suppressed portions.

d. The publication of the report as reduced or otherwise revised might be resisted by Mr. Gray as not constituting his report in the changed form.

e. The publication of

e. The publication of the fact of the submission of the report would likewise provoke inquiry as to the content and the reasons for its non-publication and might lead to leaks of the contents, both undesired eventualities.

f. Another suitable occasion for a Presidential statement, if desired, will occur or can be created.

9. Conclusion #3: Regardless of whether the report is published in any form, it is considered that a Presidential statement probably should be made along the lines hereafter indicated as soon as a suitable occasion arises or can be provided, drawing on the contents of the report but without quoting from it or acknowledging its submission.

Reasons:

a. It is the belief of the Committee that the present time is psychologically appropriate and desirable for the President to state to the country and the rest of the world why we are in the cold war, the controlling principles and policies, the problems that are faced, the work so far accomplished, including the Board's part in that work, and the task ahead.

b. Such a statement would provide an opportunity to elaborate on certain of the themes Mr. Gray has introduced which might well serve to clarify the thinking of certain sections of the American public and our allies which are not yet fully persuaded that the vigorous nature of U. S. policy with respect to the cold war is completely justified.

c. Such a statement would do much to accomplish the first two indicated objectives of the report stated in paragraph 4. above.

d. Such a statement would provide an opportunity for an expression of appreciation for Mr. Gray's contribution in the organization, activation, and development of the Board.

e. It is believed that a suitable occasion will obtain or can be obtained for such a Presidential statement.

10. Conclusion #4: That an effort be made to convince Mr. Gray of the desirability of certain minor language revisions in the report, whether published or not.

Reasons:

a. Some of the questionable material in the report, even if not presently published, might be leaked into public knowledge or might be published at some later date.

b. Some of the

b. Some of the material is so clearly susceptible of misinterpretation and misuse that if it was brought to Mr. Gray's attention at this time, he would be willing to revise or delete such material. For example, in the fourth paragraph, fifth line, on Page 12., it is thought that the word "not" was inadvertently omitted between the verbs "can afford." Also, the last sentence on Page 9. contains an insidious note, viz. the inference being that although we had not planned it that way, we are now forcing a cold war conflict upon the world.

11. Conclusion #5: It is desirable that the President communicate with Mr. Gray, preferably by confidential letter, and particularly in the event that the report is not published, to the following effect:

a. The report has been circulated among the Board members, who have given it careful consideration.

b. The President and others who have studied it are impressed by the report; the content and the recommendations are thought to have considerable merit upon which the President intends to take appropriate action.

c. It is thought to be undesirable to publish any part of the report at this time because of the presence of the sensitive and controversial material which, however, he was glad to have brought to his private attention but felt was inappropriate and undesirable to be considered publicly.

d. The report has stimulated the desire of the President to make a public statement along the lines indicated above for which he will draw upon the report.

e. Appreciation of Mr. Gray's contribution in the organization, activation, development, and work of the Board.

Reasons:

a. The points in the proposed letter are thought to be substantially accurate embodying fair conclusions.

b. Points "a." and "b." above will do much to demonstrate to Mr. Gray that the report has been used to accomplish the third objective stated in Paragraph k. above.

c. The receipt of such a letter would do much to obtain Mr. Gray's acquiescence in the non-publication of the report.

12. Recommendations:

a. The Board

a. The Board recommend to the President that in any event the report should not be published without the deletion of the sensitive and classified material.

b. The Board recommend to the President that none of the report be published.

c. Unless and until the report is revised, it should be classified to reduce the hazards of any further dissemination of the sensitive and controversial matter.

d. The Board recommend to the President that such a Presidential statement be made along the lines indicated in Paragraph 9. and that a suitable "peg" or occasion be found or devised to be used as an appropriate springboard.

e. The Board offer to assist in the preparation of such a statement if that recommendation is adopted.

f. The Board consider a draft of such a Presidential statement, presently in preparation under the supervision of the Committee.

g. The Board designate a representative to discuss informally desired minor language revisions with Mr. Gray.

h. The Board recommend to the President that he communicate with Mr. Gray along the lines indicated in Paragraph 11.

FRANK G. WISNER

For the Ad Hoc Committee of PSS
Representatives, for the Consideration
of Subject Report

Concurrences:

(signed) John Magruder
GENERAL JOHN MAGRUDER

(signed) Howland Sargeant
MR. HOWLAND SARGEANT